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# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

MAN AND STATESMAN

(ABRIDGED)

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# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

## MAN AND STATESMAN

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We are here today in praise of "arms and a man." And in praising the wisdom of the man or recounting the success of the arms it is no part of our purpose to deride those who disagreed with that man nor to taunt those who were vanquished by those arms.

We are here in memory of the humblest citizen of a nation, and in honor of the greatest statesman of his time. Abraham Lincoln's life ran the whole gamut of American society. He was born into the "poor white trash" of the Southern backwoods; he was pioneer and frontiersman; he was rail-splitter and flat-boatman; he was champion wrestler, cock-pit umpire and saloon-keeper; he was merchant, surveyor and country lawyer; he was the leading lawyer and politician, the acknowledged head and the champion orator of a political party in his state; he was legislator, congressman, statesman and President; he was leader in the most remarkable war of modern times—he was the tallest figure of the nineteenth century—he was the liberator of a race and martyr to the life of his country. Abraham Lincoln was the first president of the United States who was characteristically American.

One hundred years ago in what was then Harbin County, Kentucky, Abraham Lincoln was born. In the aristocratic sense of the phrase, he was a man of "no ancestry." His father was probably descended from people who came first from England to Massachusetts, thence to Virginia, thence to Kentucky. Abraham Lincoln's grandfather and namesake was a brother-in-law of Daniel Boone and was one of the pioneers of the middle West. This grandfather had been shot by the Indians when Lincoln's father, Thomas Lincoln, was about six years of age. Mordecai, brother of Lincoln's father, is reputed to have been industrious, but Thomas, the father of Abraham Lincoln, was what we might call, without exaggeration, lazy and trifling.

When we consider this man's ancestry and early surroundings, we are both enlightened and confused: we are enlightened in that we can see in his humble origin the source of his sympathy for his humblest fellow-man, in his frontier life we can see the cause of his manly independence, and in his early associations we can see the foundation of his firm faith in the "plain people,"—but we are confused in that we cannot find in his immediate parentage and environment the necessary stimulus and inspiration, and from his early lack of opportunity we cannot account for the development of mental power, tact and executive ability. In these latter respects the law of cause and effect is apparently broken.

His mother had been one Nancy Hanks, a woman of very humble origin and of a melancholy disposition. His father Thomas was a thriftless, ignorant fellow who loved to tell stories. He seemed to lack the instinct or ambition to settle down and build a decent home, even after he was married. He moved and moved and moved, and like the proverbial "rolling stone," he gathered

no moss. The ignorance and inconsequentiality of the Lincoln family might be gathered from the fact that it had no uniform and settled way of spelling its name: sometimes it was spelled L-i-n-k-h-o-r-n, sometimes L-i-n-c-k-o-r-n, sometimes even L-i-c-k-e-r-n.

As is well known, such poor white people in the first half of the nineteenth century had very limited chances in a slave commonwealth, and so, to escape the condition into which slavery forced the poorer whites, when the son was but seven or eight years old, the happy-go-lucky, unprogressive father loaded all the family belongings on a boat of his own construction and floated down the Ohio to Indiana. This aimless traveler finally landed and constructed a rude camp in a wild, uninhabited region near the present town of Gentryville, Indiana. The structure which Thomas Lincoln here erected to shelter his wife and young children, cannot be named out of the terminology of the dwellings of civilized man. It was not a house; it was what was known in pioneer days as a "half-faced camp"; that is, it was closed on only three sides and its floor was the earth. The bed was constructed from a number of poles fastened to the logs in one corner of this cheerless habitation, the outer corner of the bed being supported by a forked stick. In this camp the wife and children shivered for one whole winter, before Thomas could rouse himself to provide a better dwelling.

The melancholy, feeble mother died in the boy's childhood; an event which is a great calamity to most boys but was a great blessing to young Abe, for it enabled him to acquire at the early age of ten a very capable, energetic and motherly stepmother. This God-sent stepmother treated Abe and his little sister with impartiality among her own children; she also aroused all of whatever human aspiration there was in the father Thomas. She became the boy's tutor and protector against the educational indifference and hostility of his father; for Thomas was quite willing that his posterity should forever go the way their father and their fathers had gone.

The neighbors say that the boy Abe was "awful lazy," by which they mean that he was fonder of thinking and studying and talking and reasoning and story-telling, than he was of physical exertion. But the sympathetic stepmother understood and fostered the ambition of the boy. He had been to school a little: all his schooling put together would not amount to more than one year, some say not more than six months. But this limited bit of schooling was spread over a period of nine years, and the boy made good use of what he learned in school by self-culture in the intervals, all of which might teach us the important educational principle that it is not the quantity of schooling but the thoroughness of it. The boy even developed enough of the poetic spirit to be the author of this stanza:

"Abraham Lincoln  
His hand and pen.  
He will be good, but  
God knows when."

The neighborhood of Gentryville was very superstitious: it believed in the bad luck of Fridays and in the influence of the moon on crops. So Abraham Lincoln was superstitious till his dying day. He was an ungainly looking lad and did not arouse high expectations by his personal appearance. He was lanky in appearance, with a head of unmanageable hair, and had what at



first struck one as a lazy, dreamy look about the eyes. His clothes were made of tanned deer hide, his trousers usually being several inches too short and his suspenders of the one-gallows kind. Thus endowed by nature and thus clad in the garb of frontier poverty, he was not an attractive looking youngster, and a lawyer of the time who saw him, described it as "the ungodliest sight I ever saw." When Abraham was twenty-one his roving father moved again, still westward, and this time to a place near Decatur, in Illinois. Thus at the legal age of manhood he entered, unknown and unrespected, the state which was to be the future theatre of his life—the greatest life of that State, of that Nation and of that Century.

It is impossible for any fiction to be stranger than the subsequent life of this poor boy. It was now the year 1830, and in thirty years more he was to be the chosen executive of the greatest Republic of history. He had worked at hard manual drudgery since his babyhood. Now legally emancipated from his father, he helped to build a house for the family, split rails to make fences, and with the small bundle of all his earthly possessions he set out into the world to pursue his ambition. He was physically powerful and wiry; mentally slow, but patient, persistent and sure.

The story of this man's rise from that time forth should make every American proud of American institutions and American possibilities. The fact of his rise is a proof of Democracy, and the success of his rise is a justification of Republican government. His first trip into the wide, wide world was taken in 1831 to New Orleans, where he met, saw and hated slavery. On his return to Illinois he out-wrestled Jack Armstrong, the champion wrestler of the frontier, and ran for the General Assembly in 1832. The fact that a man with Lincoln's antecedents and attainments could enter the race for legislator of Illinois, shows what Western politics meant in that day. In this his first political contest he announced a principle which became the leading principle of all his after life and the chief element of his great statesmanship: he said, "so soon as I discover my opinions to be erroneous, I shall be ready to renounce them." This was in New Salem. He was beaten in this contest, but he could say with pride in after years that it was the only time in which Abraham was beaten on a direct vote of the people. In this same year he had been a captain of volunteers in the Black Hawk War, and this man who was destined to command an army of a million men, when he gave his first order to this little volunteer company, received for a reply, "Go to the devil, sir." Once forgetting the necessary word of command for swinging his company endwise so that it could march through a narrow gate, he simply shouted: "This company is dismissed for two minutes, when it will fall in again on the other side of the gate." After his political defeat he went into the store-keeping business and failed; his partner was too lazy and Abe himself was too fond of talking and reading politics to attend the success of the venture. He was also postmaster of New Salem in 1833, carrying the letters in his hat, and was assistant to the county surveyor.

All the while he was studying law, which seemed ridiculous to his acquaintances. He was successful in getting to the legislature in 1834, where he served four terms. His chief acts in this body were protesting against its pro-slavery resolutions and helping to enact some very disastrous financial legislation. He had been admitted to the bar in 1836 and moved to Springfield in 1837.

Being a very susceptible lover he first fell into love with a girl who died of a broken heart for another man. He wished to

marry on the slightest provocation, and after a fruitless Platonic affair with another woman he finally married Miss Mary Todd in 1842, she declaring that she did not marry him because he was good-looking, but because she thought he would some day be President of the United States. In 1847 he entered the lower house of Congress for one term, where he again put himself on record against slavery extension. It was not until after this Congressional term that he was finally able to pay the last of the debts occasioned by his business failure, and the faithful payment won him the useful title of "Honest Old Abe."

He now seemed to retire from politics and to settle down to the life of a practising lawyer, when in 1854 the country became a volcano of political activity, and Abraham Lincoln was again aroused to take a hand in the greatest political battles in the history of free government. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise had aroused the most latent anti-slavery feeling in the North to its highest pitch. This compromise had limited the northward spread of slavery to a certain parallel, and when it was repealed, even conservative men like Lincoln felt bound to cry out. Douglas, the Democratic statesman, had fathered this "repeal" and the enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, which was to allow the people of those territories to decide for themselves whether or not they should have slavery. In 1854 Lincoln debated this question against the Democratic champion, and at Peoria he said: "Repeal the Missouri Compromise, repeal all compromises, repeal the Declaration of Independence, repeal all past history, you still cannot repeal human nature. It still will be the abundance of man's heart that slavery extension is wrong, and out of the abundance of his heart his mouth will continue to speak."

He at once becomes the recognized champion of those who were opposed to the "repeal" and the Nebraska Bill. His oratorical powers had been wonderfully developed by his constant law practice since his retirement from Congress. He had ridden the circuit and told stories with the Western lawyers and judges and could fairly "skin" his opponent in court. His method of argument avoided sophistry and led straight to the heart of the matter. He was now well known in Illinois and was universally esteemed, and was at once accepted as just the man with the qualities to cope with the doughty Douglas, the famous "Little Giant." This Douglas was called "Little Giant" because of the smallness of his body as compared with the largeness of his mind.

Lincoln had been a Whig. In 1856 the Republican Party was formed, which crystallized the opposition to the spread of slavery. In his state he became the undisputed leader of this party. Their nominee for the Presidency was defeated and Buchanan was elected. Immediately followed Judge Taney's "Dred Scott Decision," which further drew the line between those who favored and those who opposed slavery.

The next year, 1858, is famous for the Lincoln-Douglas Debates. Douglas's senatorial term was about to expire and the Republicans put forward Lincoln to contest for the prize. Lincoln had already magnanimously yielded one senatorial contest to secure the election of an anti-Nebraska Democrat, and he had lost a nomination for the vice-Presidency. In the contest with Douglas he won the debates but lost the senatorship. This man's losses, however, later proved to be his greater gains.

It is interesting to compare and contrast these two champions. They were both conservative, sober-minded men. But Douglas was a recognized statesman, while Lincoln was but a *novus homo*. Few outside of Lincoln's own friends and better acquaintances ex-

pected him to come off with any honor against the fierce "Little Giant." Douglas was quick; Lincoln was deliberate. Douglas was polished and cultured; Lincoln was an uncouth, poor-mannered man, according to social standards. Douglas was cunning and devious in argument; Lincoln was straight as an arrow. Douglas was a powerful intellect; and so was Lincoln.

The battle was eagerly watched throughout the North, which had become a sort of political caldron, because of what was felt to be the aggressions of the pro-slavery element. Like a knowing antagonist Lincoln attacked Douglas at his most vulnerable point, assailing his record in connection with the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the passage of the Nebraska Bill. Douglas, skillful sophist that he was, dodged and attempted to parry this blow by thrusting certain well-directed questions at Lincoln. Whereupon Lincoln turned interrogatory himself and asked Douglas one question which destroyed Douglas, split Douglas's party in twain, and drew the issue squarely between the opposing forces of the entire country. He asked Douglas a question which, if answered in the affirmative, would offend the South, and which, if answered in the negative, would offend Illinois. Douglas wanted the immediate senatorship from Illinois, so he answered in the affirmative and gained the senatorship, but he offended the South and lost their support for the Presidency two years later—just as Lincoln had calculated. The famous question was—"Can the people of a Territory, in a lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from that Territory, prior to its adoption of a State Constitution?"

Douglas was re-elected to the senatorship by the state legislature, but Lincoln was from that day the chosen man of the people of Illinois. In a parade prior to one of the debates the Douglas men had carried an inscription which read, "The Little Giant," and the Lincoln men carried an inscription which read, "Lincoln, the Giant Killer." Douglas had traveled on special trains, with waving banners and beating drums; Lincoln had journeyed in the simplicity of the most undistinguished citizen. Douglas had spent \$80,000 in his canvass; Lincoln had spent less than \$1,000. Lincoln had lost and Douglas had won; Douglas had grown weak and Lincoln had grown strong.

Lincoln was now in the eye of the country and was invited to lecture in the East, which he did so acceptably as to utterly astonish all the bigots of New York and New England who had not believed that anything very remarkable could come out of the West. Horace Greely and others who did not like Seward, began to see in Lincoln a presidential possibility. In 1860 he was nominated and elected by the Republican party, the first Chief Executive to come out of the great Northwest.

So slow is the world to believe, that even then there was scarcely anybody who thought Lincoln really competent to fill the office and accomplish the task before him. Six states had seceded before he could be inaugurated. The South was very angry. The Union was actually going to pieces. Europe was laughing and acting with the airs of one who feels like shouting: "I told you so!" And the greater sentiment in the North at this time seemed disposed to let the States secede without war; men were not inclined to fight, they were too busy in their shops and factories—they had no time to measure the world-wide, age-long consequences of the destruction of the greatest Republic in the world. Men poked fun at the new President as an ordinary Western lawyer with no executive ability. Cartoonists vied with one another in caricaturing his homely looks, exaggerating the longness of his

arms and legs, the size of his feet and the thickness of his lips. He was represented as subhuman, as a gorilla, some even charging him with the very heinous offence of being part "nigger." All this he bore with the steadfastness and courage of a man who knows himself. He never swerved from his position that the Union must be preserved, adding an element to our statesmanship by showing that the first and foremost duty of a government is to defend its own existence, and that the right to do this is inherent in the nature of government and does not have to be conceded to it among any delegated powers. If the Government had in any way whatsoever, either by grant or conquest, acquired the right to exist, that very right carried with it the duty of self-preservation. On the question of slavery he was not an Abolitionist, by politics at least. It was his expressed wish that all men everywhere might be free, but as President of the United States he was not an officer of the Abolition Societies, but the chief executive of the American government under the Constitution—and the Constitution protected slavery. So, whatever were his private feelings on the question, he intended to sacrifice them to his solemn oath to defend the Constitution. He enforced the "fugitive slave law" and in his inaugural he had renounced any intention to interfere with slavery where it already existed legally. But he was against its further extension, and upon this he said he would "hold firm as a chain of steel."

So while the South was fast uniting and preparing for war, the North was rather undecided and hesitant, but the guns of Sumter, which were heard around the world and whose echo shall resound through all the future history of a great Nation, did what neither Lincoln nor danger from the South nor a mere latent love for the Union could do—they absolutely united the North. Democrats and Republicans, the followers of Douglas and the followers of Lincoln, became of one mind to settle the question of the perpetuity of the Union; all Northern parties became one party, which might be denominated the War Party. A call for seventy-five thousand was answered by the willing voices of a million, and Massachusetts had a regiment on the way to Washington within 48 hours after the call.

Here again comes out the chief element of his statesmanship: he did not call until he knew that men were ready, and even anxious to come. If he had called for troops as soon as he was inaugurated, he would probably have received much the same reply as when he gave his first orders to the Black Hawk volunteers. "My policy is to have no policy," said he; he waited upon events and acted according to the great heart and the great will of the people. "Time was his prime minister." After deciding upon a course of action he never outran the opportunity: he made every effort consistent with the authority of government to win conciliation, but he called for troops when men were ready to fight; he revoked the emancipation orders of his too hasty generals, but in response to the popular demand he issued his Emancipation Proclamation upon the heels of a Federal victory; he returned fugitive slaves, but when the Northern soldiers had become so weary as to be glad for anybody to help do the fighting, he called for the black legions, whose appearance marked the turning point of the War.

And the guns of Sumter had no less effect upon the men of the South. Eleven seceded States formed themselves into a Confederacy. The Border states of Missouri, Kentucky and Maryland were with difficulty kept in the Union, and such was the volcanic nature of the cleavage that the State of Virginia was finally di-

vided against itself. Lincoln at once realized the strategic situation of the border states, and with the instincts of the great strategist that he was, he concentrated his first efforts upon their retention. So important was the task and so earnestly did Lincoln apply himself to it that some observer said: "Lincoln would like to have God on his side, but he must have Kentucky."

The line of cleavage did not limit itself to territory, but it reached into the administrative branches of the Government, into the Army and into the Navy. One third of the officers, because of Southern lineage or Southern sympathies, left the regular naval and military forces of the Union. And I venture the assertion that the greatest single loss which the Union cause suffered during the whole conflict, was the loss of Robt. E. Lee. Many Southern men, however, preferred to stand by the Government, notably among whom were Senator Andrew Johnson, Generals Scott and Thomas, and Commodore Farragut. And it is to be said of the common soldier and sailor that not one of them deserted his post before actual war.

Let us for a moment right here consider the relation of slavery to the dreadful war that was waged. Some say that slavery brought on the war, and others say that the war was not waged in the interests of slavery. Both claims are right and probably both are by implication wrong: for slavery was not the immediate cause, the immediate "bone of contention," but slavery was the underlying cause, the cause of the cause of the war. We can best explain by a story. There are two neighbors living with no fence between them and no definite boundary line. One of those neighbors has a bad dog which the other does not like. They often quarrel about this dog. The one thinks that he has a right to keep him and let him run free; the other thinks that his neighbor has no right to keep that dog, or that, if he will keep him, he should keep him tied or in a kennel. Finally one of the neighbors decides to rid himself of the other neighbor by building a dividing fence. A fight grows out of their dispute about the right to build and the place to locate this fence. They are fighting about the fence. But it is not hard to see the relation of the dog to this fence. Well, slavery was the dog of the Civil War.

During the war there was a popular rhyme that ran thus:

"In sixty-one, the war begun;  
In sixty-two, we'll put it through;  
In sixty-three, the nigger'll be free;  
In sixty-four, the war'll be o'er—  
And Johnny come marching home."

The prophecy of this popular doggerel was fulfilled, almost to the letter. In 1861, in spite of the president's protestations of non-interference with slavery, war could not be averted. For the question had shifted from a question about the dog to a dispute about the fence. The price which the South demanded for peace was no longer slavery but secession. This price the Government would not pay. The spirit of war was full grown; the *gaudium certaminis* swept the whole manhood of the nation towards the front. The first great shock at Bull Run resulted in a Northern defeat; which, perhaps, did more good for the North than it did for the South, for it filled the South with confidence, but it filled the North with caution. In "sixty-two" the war was literally "put thru," and from the summer of this year till the appearance of black troops the outlook was very dark for the Union cause. In "sixty-three" came freedom and the Negro soldier, at the turning point of the war. The great commander thus brought up his black reserves just in time to strike the deciding blow. Lincoln had the felicity of doing the right thing at the right time. Negro

troops would not have been welcomed by the Northern soldier before this time, and even now Lincoln found it hard to get the Negroes into the Government uniform; the white soldier wanted the Negroes to be dressed in a different color and sort of suit from his own. But the Union's need of the Negro overcame this prejudice. The Emancipation Proclamation was just in time, too—just in time to make the masses of foreign nations sympathize with the Northern side of the struggle, as being a struggle for freedom as well as for Union. If issued earlier, it would have been indeed a "Pope's bull against the comet." In "sixty-four" the war was practically over; even the Confederates had the feeling that it was simply a question of time and a question of terms. Lincoln steadfastly refused to consider any terms but the restoration of the Union and the authority of the Government.

Through it all Lincoln had been prosecuting the war with the energy of an experienced commander-in-chief. He had been sifting and shifting generals until he had finally brought out Grant. Pope, McClellan, Burnside, Hooker, had all gone before. Some of them were energetic and aggressive, but none of them could be a match for the genius of the Confederate captain, Lee. McClellan was a great organizer but lacked the ability for energetic command in the field. So hesitant and unaggressive was he that during his command there came into existence the famous phrase, "All is quiet on the Potomac." Somebody praised McClellan for being a great "engineer"; Lincoln said yes, but that he seemed to have a special talent for developing a "stationary" engine. It is a remarkable thing to say of a man who was a civilian about all of his life, but Lincoln was a better strategist, excepting perhaps Grant, than any general that ever came to the command of the Army of the Potomac. By observation and study and sympathy, he learned more of the art of war than did his generals in the field. He warned Hooker not to have his army crossing the Rappahannock River in the presence of Lee, saying that Hooker's army would then be "like an ox jumped half over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear, without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other." He noted every detail in the movements of armies; he saw every opportunity to strike a deciding blow. Had he been in McClellan's shoes after Antietam, he would have injured Lee. Had he been in Meade's shoes after Gettysburg, he would have crushed Lee. He kept telling his commanders that the objective of the Army of the Potomac should be Lee's army and not Richmond. And when Grant came to command in the East he adopted the exact line of tactics which Lincoln had been endeavoring to urge upon his other generals; and Grant's success attests the military sense of Lincoln.

In his relations with his Cabinet and other public officials his justness and patriotism are plainly shown. He chose the members of his cabinet with a view to their fitness for serving the country, regardless of other considerations: he chose Chase, who was thinking that the country had made a great mistake in electing Lincoln to the Presidency instead of him; he chose Seward, who thought that he knew much more about the presidential office than the inexperienced Illinois lawyer, and was not kind enough to hide his opinion even from Lincoln himself; he chose Stanton, a Democrat, who had personally insulted Lincoln as a lawyer a few years before, who despised Lincoln the President as a frivolous story-teller, and from whom the president had sometimes to compel subordination. It is a marvellous record of tact and patriotic devotion how he harmonized and ruled these conflicting, contending spirits; how he remained both master and friend.

But be it said to the undying honor of all these men that they were devoted to their country and rendered invaluable service in her defense. Especially Stanton: he was a tyrant and a relentless prosecutor,—and that is well, for he was a good check upon the overmercifulness of Lincoln. These two characters complemented each other in the greatest task of the administration: Stanton was the grim, relentless Mars, the god of war, caring more for the business than either for the sorrow or for the joy of battle; while Lincoln was the superior divinity, unlimited in power but preferring mercy to justice, and restraining, with patient but authoritative hand, the too furious course of the subordinate war-god.

This great man also found it often necessary to “plough around” the disaffection or the apathy of the “plain people,” in whom he had such noble confidence. This is not better seen anywhere than in his relation to the slavery question. On this question he was too slow for some and too fast for others; he was too cold for the Abolitionists and too hot for the pro-slavery faction. It is the lot of a great, level, even, balanced man like Lincoln to be censured by both extremists. So normal was he that we find different persons applying exactly opposite epithets to him: some say that he was too radical, others that he was too conservative; some that he was too partisan, others that he was too liberal; some that he was extremely democratic, others that he was a tyrant; some say that he was too subject to sentiment, others that he was as feelingless as a stone; while his friends were charging him with being too lenient and too merciful to the enemy, the enemy were painting him as the incarnation of devilish malice. So it is not surprising that while some say that the whole purpose of his war and administration was to free and elevate the Negroes, others declare that he would never have issued the Emancipation Proclamation if he had not been compelled to do so. The true position of Lincoln is to be found about half way between all of these extremes. Personally he despised slavery, as practically all men, North and South, do today. But as President of the United States he had sense enough to see that it was his duty to look out for the interests of the Government and not for those of the Negro. He would interfere with slavery only when such interference was somehow connected with the welfare of the Union; he would save the Union either with or without slavery. What he did for black men, he did because he saw that it was good for all men, white and black. Said he: “In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free—honorable alike in what we give and what we preserve.”

He was perfectly clear as to his personal inclination, saying: “If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong.” He hated slavery most because of its demoralizing effect upon white men; because it compelled white men to engage in too many sham arguments in their efforts to defend it; because it often made them attack the very foundations of human liberty; because it made them attack even the Declaration of Independence. He issued his proclamation of freedom deliberately and without compulsion, because he saw that it would be a winning card in the great game of war which he was playing for the prize of a united country. There is no doubt about his estimation of the act: he called it “the central act of my administration and the great event of the 19th century.” He also said: “It is a momentous thing to be the instrument under Providence of the liberation of a race,” and, “if my name ever goes into history it will be for this act.” The most valuable possession of all that he has left us on this question of the Negro is his willingness to learn and change his mind: he at first thought

that Negro soldiers would not fight, but when they fought, he acknowledged it; once he thought that only white men should vote, but later he acknowledged that to say that self-government is right and to say also that for one race to govern another against its wish and without its co-operation is likewise right, are as opposite as "God and Mammon."

By 1865 he had overcome opposition in America and had outlived the sneers of Europe, and was the most powerful man in the world. His favorite general, Grant, by literally battering the Confederate army and pounding the defenses of Richmond, with repeated strokes like the blows of Thor's hammer, had finally opened the gates of Richmond and compelled the retreat of the out-numbered and outdone, but not out-generalled, Lee. Lincoln had entered Richmond, not as the conquerer enters the fallen stronghold of the enemy, but as a sympathetic man enters the scene of the common scourge of his country. On the 9th of April Lee surrendered an army of the most nery and long-suffering soldiers that had ever followed an Anglo-Saxon captain; and on April the 14th, after a long season of the clouds and thunders and indiscriminating fires of war, glad for the returning sunshine of peace, filled with the milk of human kindness, and with the tenderest feelings of mercifulness and pardon, the Great President was slain by the bullet of a misguided zealot. The foolish man expected some men to praise him for the deed, but the whole world abhorred him, hunted him and killed him like a dog. Grant, himself a man without the passion of hate, said of Lincoln: "In his death the nation lost its greatest hero; in his death the South lost its most just friend." At his funeral, immediately behind his coffin, marched a detachment of the troops of the race he had emancipated.

He was buried in Springfield, Ill., which had so long been his home. No one knew his birthplace, but the whole world knows his grave. At his death he was just fairly entered upon a second presidential term. Lowell calls him "the first American." He was the first president of the Republic who was American through and through. There was not one foreign element in his bringing-up; he was an unmixed child of the Western plains, born in the South, reared in the North. Most of the presidents before him, being reared nearer the Atlantic, had imbibed more or less of Eastern culture and had European airs. This man Lincoln was so thoroughly democratic as to astonish both Old and New England. He never acted "the President," and was always a man among men, the honored servant of the people.

From a five dollar fee before a justice of the peace, he had risen to a five thousand dollar fee before the supreme court of Illinois. From a study of "Dilworth's Spelling Book" in his seventh year, he had risen to write, in his fifty-seventh year, his second Inaugural, which is the greatest utterance of Man. And, yet, all of his days in school added together are less than one year. His pioneer life had given him a vein of humor which became his "life-preserver" in times of stress; it had also given him a love for human liberty that was unaffected. He felt that the enslavement of some men was but the advance guard, the miner and sapper of the enslavement of all men. He respected, even revered, the Constitution of his country, but he would violate a clause in order to save the whole instrument—just as a good surgeon will amputate a limb to save a life. From a poor captain of volunteers in the scandalous little Black Hawk War, where he, jokingly, said he "bled, died and came away," although he never had a skirmish nor saw an Indian, he had risen to the chief command in a war that numbered three thousand battles



and skirmishes and cost three billion dollars. Having no ancestry himself, being able to trace his line by rumor and tradition only as far back as his grandfather, he became, like George Washington, the Father of his Country. Born of a father who could not write his name, he himself had written the Proclamation of Emancipation, the fourth great state paper in the history of the Anglo-Saxon race—the others being Magna Charta, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. If we accept the Statement of Cicero that the days on which we are saved should be as illustrious as the days on which we are born, then Lincoln, the Savior, must always remain co-ordinate with Washington, the Father of his Country. Jackson was "Old Hickory," Taylor was "Old Rough," and there have been various names given to the other presidents, but Washington and Lincoln were the only ones whom the American people styled "Father."

Nature tried herself in the year of 1809; many great and varied geniuses were born. Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln were born on the same day, one to the mastery of nature and the other to the mastery of men; both circumpolar stars that never set.

European people could not understand how a man like Lincoln, who was born, what they call a peasant, in Europe, could wear supreme power as lightly as Lincoln wore his. They had been used to Cromwells and Napoleons, who rose to rule and not to obey, to enslave and not to free, the people. A Frenchman could not understand why a ruler like Lincoln, in command of a million armed men, would jeopardize his tenure of office by holding a presidential election in 1864. A Frenchman would have declared the whole Constitution suspended and himself Dictator during the remainder of the war. But the Republican form of government was more respected by Lincoln in time of war than by some other presidents in times of the greatest peace. In this he rendered a great service, not only to his country, but to the whole liberty-loving world, for he showed the ability of a Republic to save itself in a life-and-death grapple without abating the freedom of its citizenship. After his death, the French Liberals sent Mrs. Lincoln a medal to the honor of the deceased President, part of the inscription being: "Saved the Republic without veiling the Statue of Liberty." For the first time in the history of the world democracy had demonstrated its right to a place of respect beside the more ancient form of government.

Again it is to the everlasting honor of the American people that the death of a man like Lincoln in a time like Lincoln's, should cause such a little stir and no revolution in the government. The vice-president, a man who did not possess the entire confidence of the party in power, was allowed to assume the office of president without a struggle. And it is a marvel of patriotism, of order and of self-control, than an army of a million men, who held within their hands a nation's fate, should march down Pennsylvania avenue in review before this new president, lay down their victorious arms and return to the fireside and to the toil of factory and field. It was a sight for the gods, the demi-gods and the crowned heads of the ancient world. It was the triumph of Democracy.

Child of the American soil, cradled and nursed in the very bosom of nature, he loved his country with the passion with which most men love their human mothers. He could not bear the thought of one iota of detraction from her honor, her dignity or her welfare. Against her dismemberment he was willing to fight to the end of his second administration or till the end of time. He might tolerate anything else except disunion,—even the right of some of his fellowmen to enslave others. Of every con-

cession which he made during his administration, to friend or foe, the sine qua non was Union. A house divided against itself cannot stand. In this he left us a great heritage; it is a lesson for both sections and for all races of any section. White men of the South, black men of the South, by the eternal God of heaven, there can be no division of destiny on the same soil and in the bosom and the lap of the same natural mother. Men may attempt and accomplish discrimination in a small way, but Almighty God and all-mothering nature are absolutely impartial. They have woven the fabric of life so that the thread of each man's existence is a part of the whole. He who sets fire to his neighbor's house, endangers the existence of his own; he who degrades his neighbor's children, undermines the character of his own. Together we rise and together we fall is the plan of God and the rule of Nature. We must lean together in the common struggle of life; the syncline is stronger than the anticline. In a great nation with an increasing fame, the lesson of Lincoln's life must grow in importance. As long as the human heart loves freedom his name will be a word on the tongues of men. His name will be a watchword wherever liberty in her struggles with tyranny, lifts her embattled banners. No man of the ancient or the modern world has a securer place in the hearts and memories of men than this man Lincoln, who was born in obscurity, who died in a halo, and who now rests in an aureola of historic glory.

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